

ROCK FORWARD, KNEE LIFT

This gait activity, Rock Forward, Knee Lift is the most similar to walking. Bringing the rear leg forward to take a step, and rolling the body weight across the foot from heel to toe is the foot motion you want participants to practice.

Benefits »

- ◉ Works on gait, including swinging the rear leg forward.
- ◉ Improves internal sense of balance via attention to weight shifts (somatic learning).
- ◉ Practices one-legged standing.
- ◉ Improves functional range of motion at the hip, knee, and ankle.

Set It Up »

Provide balance support for each participant—a sturdy chair, handrail, or walker.

How to Do It »

- ◉ Use the following cues.
 - Stand at the side of your chair, holding onto the chair with one hand. The feet are offset; the foot closest to the chair should be forward.
 - Rock forward and back a few times.
 - When you're ready, rock forward and lift the rear knee up and forward.
 - Hold for just a moment.
 - Put the lifted foot back down to where it started behind you, toe to heel, then rock back, again.
 - When you stop, most of your weight should be on the back leg again.
- ◉ Repeat the sequence several times.
- ◉ Do the other leg from the other side of the chair.



Give It More Balance »

- ⦿ Do more repetitions.
- ⦿ Give it some rhythm. Count a rhythm with them, call the cues with a clear cadence, or use music.
- ⦿ Hold onto the chair only loosely.
- ⦿ Intermediate: Add Rock Back, Knee Lift to the sequence: Rock forward knee lift; rock back, knee lift.
- ⦿ Intermediate: Increase hold times at the end of movements.
- ⦿ Intermediate: Try Rock and Walk from the Rhythm and Moves section (see page 322).
- ⦿ Intermediate: Lift the outside arm as the knee comes up and forward.
- ⦿ Advanced: Do the easier versions without touching the chair.

Keep It Safe »

Take it slow and keep participants close to their balance supports.

Live It »

Rock and roll for the 80- and 90-year-olds—who would have thought it? These activities mimic important footfall patterns and weight-transfer elements of gait. The rhythm and rocking make gait flow better and make one-legged standing much more doable.